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Subject: FYI

Santa Fe Opera's chief conductor resigns

James M. Keller | The New Mexican
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Santa Fe Opera announced Tuesday afternoon, Aug. 28, that Frédéric Chaslin, the company's chief conductor, has resigned his position.

Chaslin's departure did not appear to have been anticipated. Joyce Idema, Santa Fe Opera's director of press and public relations, told *The New Mexican* that Chaslin informed the company of his decision shortly after the summer opera season ended on August 25, and that he has now returned to his home in Paris. Asked whether Chaslin would conduct the productions of Verdi's *La traviata* and Offenbach's *La Grande-Duchesse de Gérolstein* that he was scheduled to lead next summer, she stated that he would not.

The company's general director, Charles MacKay, issued a brief statement: "On behalf of the entire company I wish to thank Maestro Chaslin for his enormous musical contribution during the past two seasons. We regret his departure and wish him the very best."

Chaslin was named to his post in May 2010, an appointment that was met with some surprise since he was little known in American musical circles. He had, however, conducted *La traviata* at Santa Fe Opera in 2009, and his selection as chief conductor developed out of that initial season. In 2011, he conducted Gounod's *Faust*, and this summer, both Puccini's *Tosca* and Rossini's *Maometto II*. His work has been applauded by audiences and critics, and reviews of this summer's productions have routinely noted the improved standards of orchestral playing achieved in his two years as chief conductor. During that time he has also appeared as a pianist and conductor with Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival.

Attempts to reach Chaslin through his American managers were unsuccessful yesterday. According to Santa Fe Opera's press release, he cited his concert and recording commitments with the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra (which he joined as music director beginning with the 2011-12 season) and his desire to spend more time composing as reasons for his decision. The company said it will embark on a search for his successor this fall.